

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend paragraph [0045] as follows:

~~Fig. 21 is a schematic diagram~~ Figs. 21a and 21b are schematic diagrams of an image forming portion of the image forming apparatus shown in Fig. 20;

Please amend paragraph [0046] as follows:

Fig. 22 is an enlarged view of relevant parts of the image forming portion shown in ~~Fig. 21~~Fig. 21a;

Please amend paragraph [0074] as follows:

In spite of reduction of friction in the contact portion, there is a possibility that the belt may wear out due to constant rubbing of the plate against the belt and with the passage of time. Another method which involves a softer contact and is space-conserving is the use of a conductive brush (item 110 in Figure 21b, claim 16). However, this method also has a drawback in that the bristles may come off. All the methods mentioned above have their merits and demerits and may be employed as the situation demands.

Please amend paragraph [0117] as follows:

The image formation process is explained next with reference to ~~FIG. 21 through FIG. 22~~FIGs 21a, 21b, and 22. Image signals are processed by a not shown image processing section and converted, based on the image signals, to black (K), yellow (Y), Magenta (M), and cyan (C) color signals and transmitted to the image writing section 13.

Please amend paragraph [0135] as follows:

The transfer roller 9 is provided slightly downstream of the transfer nip NP. Upstream of the transfer nip NP is provided a conductive element 10 that applies a counter bias in order to control the electric field of the transfer nip inlet. In the second embodiment, the conductive element 10 is in the form of a plate (counter bias blade), as explained in FIG. 8. The counter bias blade 10 comprises a 0.5-millimeter-thick conductive PVDF (volume resistance of about  $5 \times 10^3 \text{ } \Omega \cdot \text{cm}$  and good conductor) glued to a sheet metal frame. The sheet metal frame is fixed to the transfer unit frame. The PVDF plate thrusts out of the sheet metal and because of the flexing makes contact with the intermediate transfer belt 4 and applies a bias. The front edge of the PVDF blade 10 has a curvature R so that the intermediate transfer belt 4 is not damaged. A not shown bias current source applies a negative bias of -1 kilovolts to the blade 10. In an alternative embodiment, blade 10 may be replaced with a brush 110. However, as noted previously, this method also has a drawback in that the bristles may come off.